

T H E

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Distress'd Baronet:

A F A R C E.

IN TWO ACTS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

DEDICATED TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES.

By C. STUART.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT,
OPPOSITE OLD BOND STREET, PICCADILLY.
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BY C. STUART

LONDON

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OPPOSITE OLD BOND STREET, LONDON

M. COLEMAN

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

The PRINCE of WALES.

SIR,

YOU are the phenomenon of your rank. Even the Courtier must admire your honour, while every good citizen reveres your most unparalleled princely probity. For when did the heroism of any Prince, besides your Royal Highness, ever condescend to sink into the level of a commoner, in order to be *just*? This was true magnanimity! Such a glorious degradation has exalted you in the eyes of all mankind.

While you bore your disappointment like a great Prince, your Royal Highness acted like an honest man. Not even Henry V. when Prince of Wales, behaved so nobly, at the moment in which he

bowed

bowed to the authority of the Chief Justice, whom he had insulted. Henry only obeyed the powerful laws of his country. But your Royal Highness, by relinquishing your splendour for the satisfaction of your creditors, voluntarily obeyed the admirable laws of a most honourable heart.

Before your Royal Highness reached maturity, Britain stood in small estimation among nations, as a polished state. Few travellers of consequence deigned to visit her shores. No eminent foreigners were to be seen here, but the Diplomatic body, and sometimes in war a distinguished captive. This island made no part of the grand tour. We were deemed boisterous as our foaming barrier; dreaded for our arms, but never courted for our arts.

The taste, however, the hospitality, the affability, and the elegant accomplishments of your Royal Highness, burst at once upon the nation, and soon were blazoned throughout the Continent. Even the French nobility themselves, those arbiters of fashion, were among the first to subscribe to the general opinion. Your Royal Highness was admired and imitated by every foreigner of rank and taste. Whatever dress you wore, whatever carriage

or caparison your fancy approved of, was sure to become the reigning fashion in France as well as in Britain. Your entertainments were splendid. Your guests were learned, noble, and accomplished. Your amusements were polished and manly. You were the only Prince throughout Europe, whose manners commanded universal imitation; and your Royal Highness stamped a character on the English nation, for their taste and refinement, heretofore unacknowledged.

In this career of your splendour, that reflected such honour on the empire, your Royal Highness was unfortunately stopped. But every good citizen now hopes to see you soon resume the lustre of your rank. Thus once more elevated to your proper sphere, accomplished natives, and intelligent foreigners will again be honoured by your society. Your Royal Highness's taste will re-illumine the circles of fashion both in Britain and on the Continent. Trade will be promoted; all the branches of your illustrious family be made happy; and your Royal Highness's princely conduct become the theme of every tongue, because you are the *munificent patron of every British art.*

If

If the following trifle shall in the least contribute
to your Royal Highness's momentary amusement,
it will afford the most heartfelt satisfaction to an

Humble admirer

Of your ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

PRINCIPLES and CONDUCT,

THE AUTHOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Sir George Courteous,	—	Mr. PALMER.
Captain Prywell,	—	Mr. PACKER.
Pop, (a Pawnbroker)	—	Mr. SUETT.
Quirk, (a Lawyer)	—	Mr. BADDELEY.
Aminadab,	— —	Mr. BURTON.
La Roche,	—	Mr. WALDRON.
Porpoise,	— —	Mr. WILSON.
Servant to Lord Newmarket,		Mr. JONES.
Servant to Quirk,	—	Mr. SPENCER.
Servant to Sir George,		Mr. NEWBOLD.

W O M E N.

Sophia,	— —	Mrs. WILSON.
Mrs. Termagant,	—	Mrs. HOPKINS.
Ninny,	— —	Miss COLLINS.
Lady,	— —	Miss TIDSWELL,
Maid,	— —	Miss DANCER.

T H E

DISTRESS'D BARONET.

A C T . I.

SCENE I. *An Apartment at Sir George Courteous's.*

Sir George Courteous discover'd.

Sir George.

AH! Sir George! Sir George!—to what an unfortunate dilemma art thou reduced!—To-day when I'm of age, and ought to inherit three thousand pounds a year, I inherit—what?—nothing but poverty, and useless parchments—what the gaming-table has begun, the lawyer and money-lender will soon finish!—for my post-dated bonds and mortgages—have left me without a shilling!—Ha! my uncle.

Enter Captain Prywell.

Captain. As you are this day of age, my dearest nephew, I come to congratulate you—You are now, by the laws of your country, emancipated from all ties, but those which bind a gentleman---Blessed with a liberal education, an elegant person, and an ample fortune, let prudence be your pilot—and honour be your rudder—then you will glide thro' the voyage of this life, with the calm and pleasurable gales of true sensibility.

Sir George. Oh, Sir!—no more uncle!—

Captain. How now, Sir George!—perturbed and melancholy on the very day that you take possession of your fortune?

Sir George. Oh! uncle—do not probe me to the soul with your excruciating irony—when I inform'd you last night of the true state of my affairs, and that I am now worse than nothing.

Captain. Had you informed me sooner, my dear nephew, perhaps I might have saved you from ruin. A commiseration for fools and knaves has brought you to this pass—for you had no judgment in your friendships—like an act of insolvency, you made no discrimination between the imprudent distresses of the prodigal or the knave—and the real distresses of the unfortunate man of worth.

Sir George. Do not upbraid me, for I am now indeed overwhelmed by misfortunes.—That woman, Mrs. Termagant—whom by report only you know, threatens now to imprison me, because I will not answer all her infamous demands.

Captain. What is to be done, nephew—for shame—to borrow money when I was abroad, of such a low, base creature of fortune. Money too—that her husband accumulated by rapine and murder in the East, can only answer the purposes of dissipation and destruction in the West. But what can I do for you?

Sir George. If you will be so obliging as wait on my attorney—he will do a great deal for you, and perhaps might yet settle this matter with Mrs. Termagant.

Captain. Is not Mr. Quirk your attorney?

Sir George. Yes, Sir.

Captain. I don't like him, because I believe him to be a disgrace to the honourable profession of the law.

Sir George. I can't think it.

Captain. I am afraid, Sir George, that it is such as Quirk, that poisons the sacred streams of justice, and tinges the reputation of a profession, that has divinely converted the chaos of human barbarity, into the most beautiful order and refinement: a profession the most pre-eminent, and the most honourable among mankind.

Sir George. I can't think so of Quirk—because I have often experienced his blunt integrity.

Captain. May I soon be deceived!—But, nephew, you know my disposition—I shall never desert you.—Now for your attorney.—Ah! Sir George, Sir George—had you handled the spontoon under my tuition, instead of handling the four aces with others, you would not now have been thus tricked out of all your estate.—'Sdeath, when I can't employ my time and fortune better than by play—may I be despised by my country—and degraded by my king!

[Exit.

Sir George. Pray heav'ns! you may settle it.—How I detest

detest myself for my folly—Oh! could we recall time, or dissipation be blended with discretion—how rational and permanent would be our pleasures—but youth wants the virtue of age, and age the vigour of youth—For tho' every thorn has not its rose—yet we well know that every rose has its thorn. [Exit.]

SCENE II. *Sophia's Lodgings.*

Sophia and Ninny.

Sophia. And are you, Ninny, really in the service of Sir George Courteous?

Ninny. Yes, my lady—yes, Miss Sophia.—I was at first his maid of all work—thof so be as how I now am his house-keeper, Ma'am,

Sophia. But would not you rather be again in papa's service?

Ninny. What, in Mr. Pop's?—No, Madam—I'll never serve an old gentleman again.—

Sophia. Why?

Ninny. 'Cause they are so teasing.—But I heard of your running away, Ma'am—

Sophia. I hope, my dear, you will never inform your master, who I am.

Ninny. Lord, Ma'am, not I!—But why should you be ashamed of your papa—thof he be but a pawnbroker, an't he as rich as Crusey, Ma'am—as rich as Robinson Crusey?—

Sophia. This girl!—But I must see her; else she will disclose my family to Sir George, and perhaps inform my father where I am. (*aside.*) *Ninny.*

Ninny. Ma'am!

Sophia. Will you keep a secret?

Ninny. Where is it?—Give it me!

Sophia. There is something for you to be secret. (*Gives money.*)

Ninny. Is this the secret I am to keep?—Well, I vow it is a very pretty secret. (*Looking at the money.*) Lard! I should like to keep such another secret.

Sophia. Simplicity!—There, my dear, is another for you. (*Giving more money.*)

Ninny. Thank your Ladyship for your secrets; now the one secret will not be dull or weary, you know, as it will keep the other company.

Sophia. Now, my dear, you will never open your lips to any one, that you have either seen me, or known me.

Ninny. Never! never! never!

Sophia.

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Sophia. And you will call on me again in an hour, as I have something to intrust to you?

Ninny. That I will, Miss Sophy.—Is it another secret? —Ha! ha! ha! —

Sophia. It is, my dear.

Ninny. Then I am sure I shall keep it for your sake, (*aside*) or my own.—Oh, such sweet pretty secrets! [*Exit.*]

Sophia. Poor artless girl! —But I am now in a very disagreeable situation! —I would have rather given one third of the jewels and money I have taken off from my father, than that girl should have discovered me at the window! —To depend on the discretion of a fool for the preservation of one's liberty, is a very slender dependence indeed; though even in a free country. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *Quirk's Office.*

Porpoise discovered writing.

Enter Quirk.

Quirk. Hark'ee, Porpoise!

Porpoise. Sir! (*coughing.*)

Quirk. What the devil makes you cough so? You are as lean as the long vacation.

Porpoise. True, Sir;—Counsellor Calve'shead called, and left his card.

Quirk. He may call, and cat-call at my door, but I'll leave him no more briefs! —A fellow that lives up in garret chambers, four pair of stairs high! What respectable attorney, does he think, will mount up to his tower of Babel with a brief?

Porpoise. True, Sir!

Quirk. Besides, he can't wag his chops nimble enough in any cause, unless that of a turbot and lobster-sauce at the Rolls Tavern.

Porpoise. True, Sir! —

Quirk. Oh! he is a special pleader, when tongue and teeth are against turbot and turtle; ha! ha! ha! He would make a rare kitchen counsel.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, here is a lady, that wishes to speak to you immediately.

Quirk. Shew her in.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Enter

Enter Mrs. Termagant.

Quirk. Madam, your business with me?

Mrs. Termagant. I am come, Sir, to get you to examine a five thousand pound bond immediately.

Quirk. Are you? Pray, my Lady, be seated.

Mrs. Termagant. Do you know Sir George Courteous?

Quirk. (aside) My worthy client Sir George—but shall I know him or not?

Mrs. Termagant. I say, Mr. Quirk, do you know Sir George Courteous?

Quirk. A little, Madam.

Mrs. Termagant. Then you know a base, unprincipled fellow.

Quirk. Ha! this must be the Widow Termagant—and now to abuse the Baronet, in order to serve him. *(aside)*—He has, indeed, a most infamous character—and he plays the very devil with all your sex.

Mrs. Termagant. Nay, not with all—for though he has his antipathies, he has likewise his sympathies.

Quirk. He has, indeed, his good qualities, Madam.

Mrs. Termagant. Good qualities!—I find I must employ another attorney. *(rising)*

Quirk. I mean, his natural qualifications are good.

Mrs. Termagant. Oh, Sir—

Quirk. His person, Madam. *(bowing)* I had nearly deprived myself of serving my worthy client, Sir George.

Mrs. Termagant. He is the most ungrateful—

Quirk. The most abandon'd—

Mrs. Termagant. Unfeeling—

Quirk. Murderer—

Mrs. Termagant. Of peace of mind—*(almost crying)*

Quirk. Fortune—

Mrs. Termagant. And the jewel reputation—a diamond—

Quirk. Of the first water—

Mrs. Termagant. As mine is, Mr. Quirk. *(crying)*

Quirk. Undoubtedly!—I wish any one would bring him under my clutches—I would fix him,

Mrs. Termagant. Do ye?—Read that bond—

Quirk. (giving a bond)
(aside) Now, Madam, I defy your malice to my client.

Mrs. Termagant. As Shylock says, “Let him look to his bond—he was wont to call me peevish and snappish”—and refused me his hand!—But “let him look to his bond.”

Quirk.

Quirk. (aside) How lucky! A bond and judgment against poor Sir George.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, a gentleman wants to speak to you immediately on some very particular business.

Quirk. Psha!—I am busy.—Who is he?

Servant. An officer of the army.

Quirk. With your permission, Madam, shall I admit him for a few moments?

Mrs. Termagant. By all means, Sir.

Quirk. Shew the gentleman up. [*Exit Servant*].—Madam, I have perused this with attention, and I find it is only a simple bond.

Mrs. Termagant. A simple bond!

Quirk. (aside) A bond and judgment.—Such an unprincipled woman would have entered up judgment—executed—and ruin'd my poor client, had she not luckily fallen into my hands.

Mrs. Termagant. Only a simple bond!—Then my attorney, Mr. Flaw, who died last week, has not drawn it up right—for I intended it as a bond and judgment.

Quirk. Unlucky!—Lucky, indeed, for my distress'd client. (*aside*)

Mrs. Termagant. Oh! what shall I do?

Quirk. You can do very little, Madam. I must take out a special original for you, Madam, which will prevent Sir George taking out a writ of error.

Enter Captain Prywell.

Captain. Sir, you know Sir George Courteous?

Quirk. Speak softly, Sir—What of him?—Another client against poor Sir George. (*aside*) I know him very well, Sir; he is—

Captain. My nephew, Sir.

Quirk. Is he so? What, you are Captain Prywell; a gentleman whom all the world admires—and your nephew is the most worthy—

Mrs. Termagant. Mr. Quirk, I won't lose a moment in arresting—

Quirk. That villain Sir George—Hush! stay a moment. (*To Captain*) What can I do, Sir, for so worthy and generous a gentleman as your nephew?

Captain. You have heard of Mrs. Termagant?

Quirk. Hush!—Oh, yes—an infamous—

Mrs. Termagant. Mr. Quirk!

Quirk.

Quirk. Dear, sweet lady ! (running to her)

Captain. Mr. Quirk !

Quirk. Hush, Captain, don't discover yourself.

Mrs. Termagant. I say, Mr. Quirk, can I seize Sir George to-night ?

Quirk. Yes, if you please, my dear Madam. (Running up to the Captain) But what of that vile woman ?

Captain. She is going to put a five thousand pound bond in force against Sir George.

Quirk. Hush !—I know it—but I defy her.

Mrs. Termagant. Mr. Quirk !

Quirk. Madam !

Mrs. Termagant. I have now determined upon his arrest.—Go to the utmost rigour of the law directly—and I shall wait upon you to-morrow morning. Now, my ungrateful Baronet—I shall soon punish you for your perfidious love.

[Exit.]

Quirk. It is even hard thus to appear a rascal, although it be in order to save a friend. Captain, you observ'd that lady ?

Captain. Yes—who is she ?

Quirk. No less a personage, I assure you, than the very identical Mrs. Termagant herself.

Captain. Indeed !

Quirk. Even so—and persuading her that I had a most rancorous enmity to Sir George—she has made me her attorney against him, besides putting me in possession of his five thousand pound bond.

Captain. And what do you intend to do ?

Quirk. The money must be paid ; for I can never betray the confidence of any one—not even of the greatest villain alive.—Confidence must on no account be repaid by treachery.—No, no—

Captain. Sir, I admire your honour—but what is to be done ?

Quirk. By gaining this bond, I pull the talons out of that vulture. Therefore, Sir George is safe, and I mean to act in this affair as an amicable arbitrator, by soothing down her asperity to accede to Sir George's most convenient terms of repayment.

Captain. Sir, this instance you have given of your honourable conduct has quite eradicated my prejudices against you, and prejudices I had—for which I now sincerely beg your pardon.

Quirk. Look'ee, Captain ; law is like a sword—In the hands of an honest man, it defends your liberty—it protects your property—but in the hands of a villain, it assassinates even your very existence.

C

Captain.

Captain. True! true! and it is indeed a most lamentable reflection, that while the law produces the most amiable, honest, and elevated characters—it sometimes produces the most abandon'd.

Quirk. It is lamentable, Captain, but by no means wonderful—for we well know, that all the other liberal professions are subject to the same disgraces. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *An Apartment at Sir George Courteous's.*

Sir George meeting La Roche.

Sir George. Well, Monsieur, did you deliver my letter?

La Roche. Mi Lor, Sir George, I did. (Sings.)

“On a message I can run—or slip a billet-doux,

“With your humble servant and slave, mi Lor.” (bowing.)

Sir George. Where is the answer?

La Roche. Dère be de letter. (Giving the letter.) Oh, mi Lor—so pretty—so charmant a lady was never look'd at by my own two pair of eyes! her skin soft as halabastard! white as velvet!—lips like diamonds—eyes like sherries, and teeth like ivy—ay, like de ivy bush!—Oh sacra.

(Sings.) “She was tall and stout like a populous tree,

“Her hair as red as a rose;

“She look'd like a 'squire of no degree, -

“When driving her Sunday's coach.”

Sir George. Peace, firrah! I can't understand what I am reading. Let me see; (reads) “Sir,—My hand is not my own. I have two twin sisters, each of whom have greater fortunes than me; and, perhaps, greater peculiarities. “The one delights in nothing but horse-racing and hunting—The other is all delicacy and affectation in the extreme. Until you gain their consent to the match, “mine is of no avail—Adieu—Sophia Howard.” Their consent to the match—Adieu!—Demme, I don't know what to make of it.—Instead of firing my blood and mounting in my brain, like generous Burgundy and rapturous Champagne! 'tis flat as an unsugar'd cup of weak tea! Psha!—Did you see the lady, La Roche?

La Roche. Oh! mi Lor, me did; and she is so most very charmant and beautiful!—She gave me tree guinea—tree loudores.

Sir George. Ha! that shews at least her antipathy to me can't be very violent.

La Roche. Oh, she raved and prattled like von Moorfield lady, about you, my Lor, Sir George.

Sir George. About me! Pray, La Roche, what said she?

La Roche. And I told her you was de best, noble gentleman

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tleman in all de world ! Dat all de ladies were in love wid you, and you vas in love wid all——

Sir George. How, Sir ?

La Roche. Her pretty person only. (*aside*) Ha ! very well come off.

Sir George. Dear La Roche ! — You Frenchmen are so faithful ! And did you see her read the letter ?

La Roche. Me did ; and she kifs'd it von ten'dozen times, den put it in her halabastard bosom !

Sir George. Kifs'd it before you ?

La Roche. 'Pon honneur !

Sir George. Come, come, La Roche, that is too grofs.

La Roche. (*aside*) He won't believe dat. Den I am certain sure she has kifs'd it before dis time.

Sir George. Ha ! ha ! ha ! you Frenchmen can always secure a retreat.

La Roche. For when she put it in her pocket——

Sir George. Her pocket ! Why, sirrah, you said just now, that she put it in her bosom.

La Roche. Ah, mi Lor ! — (*aside*) What shall I say ? — Ah, mi Lor ! de pocket of de lover, you know, is de bosom, de breast—dat be de lover's pocket in France, my Lor.

Sir George. Psha ! Sirrah, don't call me my Lord ! I have no title to it. [*Exit.*]

La Roche. Pardonnez moi ! I tought all de English men de lords of de creation.

(*Sings.*) “ When mighty roast beef was Jack Englishman's
“ drink,

“ It put life in dere stomachs, and made dere hearts
“ good.” [*Exit.*]

SCENE V. *Pop's House.*

A Pawnbroker's Shop.

Peter Pop discover'd.

Pop. No tidings of Sophy yet ! — Oh ! the runaway robber ! to take off three thousand pounds in jewels and money ! — This comes of larning and refin'd feelings, as she calls it. — To run away from me because I was to have married her to my worthy friend, Mr. Samuel Sillybub, the rich confectioner — It shews that she has no taste indeed, for the sweets of this world ! Oh ! Peter Pop ! Peter Pop ! — what avails all your Sophy's larning, if she was born to rob me ? It is the first time I ever knew that people should be larned, in order to become robbers ! I am sure that I rob the rich and the poor every day, and yet I am

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not larned. I have just as much larning as can write a duplicate, and can count the rule of three direct—that is—not to lend one guinea, without having the value of four guineas.

Enter a Lady and her Maid.

Lady. Go back, Betty, and sit in the carriage, at the end of the passage, till I try if I can match some plate here.

Maid. Yes, my Lady. [*Exit Maid.*]

Lady. Mr. Pop, I hope the paste ear-rings are finish'd, as I go to Bath to-morrow.

Pop. Yes, my Lady, here they are—and I defy any jeweller, without a very narrow inspection, to distinguish them from those you shew'd me. (*Giving the ear-rings,*)

Lady. Vastly pretty. (*Changing them*) Now how much will you lend me on these brilliants?

Pop. The bracelets, you know, which you gave me, pay for the paste ones—The utmost I can lend on them is a hundred.

Lady. Let me have the money—for I had a great run of ill-luck last night.

Pop. There. (*Giving her a note*) I shall book it in the old name, my Lady.

Lady. In what name you please—Now for Bath! but I shall return again by the meeting of Parliament, when my next half year's jointure shall become due, and I will then take out one of the brilliants, and leave you one of the paste ones. [*Exit.*]

Pop. Very well.

Enter Porpoise.

Porpoise. Mr. Quirk will be here in half an hour, Sir, with a Baronet who wants to raise some money.

Pop. Barons and Baronets are always raising money.—Oh! if they could pledge their patents, and give me a bill of sale on them, demme, I would enjoy more titles than the Great Mogul, the Grand Signior, and the Emperor of Morocco. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI. *Sophia's Lodgings.*

Enter Sophia.

The letter I wrote as from my sister—for sister I have none—that letter I hope has somewhat disconcerted Sir

Sir George—no matter—it will certainly effect my purpose. My thus personating two ideal twin sisters, each of whom are to have greater fortunes than myself, is an excellent scheme indeed to prove the sincerity of Sir George's passion. (*Knocking hard*) Ha! here he comes.—Shall I squint?—The Countess of Ogle kill'd her husband by her squint.—Shall I waddle in my gait, and stoop forward like Lady Puny, and throw myself back, thus, like a French dancer? 'Tis the most agreeable attitude to throw one's person into perspective. Then my fan—how shall I handle my fan? Shall I bite my fan— or bite my lips?—But here is the Baronet.—Now prudery—distortion—and all the stiff train of affectation assist me!

(*Throws herself into a ridiculous attitude.*)

Enter Sir George.

Sir George. Very like her sister Sophia, if she walk'd with her ease, (*aside.*) Madam. (*to her.*)

Sophia. Sir, your business! (*lisp.*)

Sir George. Devilish like her! as like my Sophia as a crooked shilling is to a plain one, (*aside.*) Madam, I expected to have the pleasure of seeing your sister, Miss Sophia.

Sophia. She is gone out a shopping, Sir.

Sir George. Lisps, and hisses like a serpent, (*aside.*)—She is gone out a shopping, Sir. (*mimicking.*)

Sophia. You are Sir George Courteous, I presume?

Sir George. Yes, Madam!—I presume. (*mimicking her aside.*)

Sophia. Sir George, Sophia has related to sister Di and myself, the whole of your private conversation with her.

Sir George. The devil she has! (*aside.*)—Indeed, Madam!

Sophia. Every word—from the pressing of her hand at the Pantheon, to the salute at Kensington gardens promenade---the lifting up of the fan; the plucking of the rose; the slipping of the shoe; and the sighing of the swain, in the declaration of his passion!---every tittle has she told us,---Ha! ha! ha! (*aside.*)

Sir George. Indeed!

Sophia. Certainly! for we have all three bound ourselves never to marry without the joint consent of the whole.--but I don't think I shall ever enter in'o the state.

Sir George. Oh, Madam, your person, and your manner---(*aside*) I see not the least difference between her and her sister Sophia.

Sophia. (*aside*) I don't lisp enough,

Sir

Sir George. She's more graceful than I thought her--- Pretty teeth---full as pretty as Sophy. (*aside.*)---Were not my hand in honour engaged, Madam---The very picture of her sister!

Sophia. I am alarm'd! (*aside.*) Your hand---Sir George, ---your hand.---

Sir George. If I were not engag'd, Madam---

Sophia. What mean you? (*not lisping so much.*)

Sir George. (*aside*) Custom makes her lisping agreeable ---Dear Madam, I mean that if I had seen you before your sister Sophia---

Sophia. You would have--- (*alarmed*)

Sir George. In preference have resigned my hand and heart to you, my dearest angel.---(*aside*) This flattering compliment will obtain her consent, I think, to my union with Sophia.

Sophia. Vastly pretty, Sir George.---(*aside*) Oh! man! man!--thy heart, like an ungrateful mirror, flatters only the present, but retains no traces of the absent, although it had adored you for ages!

Sir George. Madam!---

Sophia. I have a great mind to discover myself and discard him. (*aside.*)

Sir George. Your sister Sophia is, to be sure, a most fine, lively, elegant girl; but then your appearance eclipses both her and her sister Diana, as the Sun does pale-fac'd Luna and twinkling Venus.

Sophia. Diana! Diana! Pray, did you then ever see my sister Diana?

Sir George. Not I, upon my soul, my fairest! But I am certain, that Nature cannot conceive a form more elegant, a face more beautiful, or a mind more delicate, penetrating and refined, than you have, Madam. O, my dearest Penelope! permit me, on my knees, thus to solicit your hand in exchange for my poor bleeding heart.

Sophia. There's my sister Sophia now coming this way, Sir George---will you declare your sentiments before her?

Sir George. Not---not---not now, my dearest; (*confused*) any other time will do as well.

Sophia. Sister Di will return in an hour from riding; shall you then wait on her, Sir George?

Sir George. If you give me hope, my angel---

Sophia. You may hope.

Sir George. I shall then wait on her, my fairest, to solicit her consent.

Sophia. But do not make love to Diana too, Sir George; for she will never love any thing but her horse, her dogs, her phaetons, her cards, and her dice,

Sir George. My dearest Penelope, it is you alone that are love's polar star! Adieu! (*aside*) Now, that I've secur'd her consent, I'll soon return, and hunt down the will of Diana, and then my felicity is compleat. [*Exit.*]

Sophia. Oh, happiness! what a phantom art thou! the very shadow of a hope, which is in itself but a shadow to pursue a shadow's shadow! How weak! how vain!--When I eloped from my father, and a hated marriage, I thought I should be happy! When I first beheld Sir George, and listened to his fascinating tongue—I then built pleasure's fanciful palace in hope's paradise.—Now, his wandering mind has dissipated the dream, and left no trace, but despair, behind! I—no!—no!—I must see him once more!—I shall appear as the feign'd Diana!--Perhaps---I know not what to do---I shall dress, however, as Diana---but discard him as Sophia. [*Exit.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I. *A Pawnbroker's Shop.**Enter Pop.**Pop.*

WHAT hard times do we live in?—I must have more warehouses to hold my goods.—Three houses will never hold them long.—I believe if the times continue so bad, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of buying up the leases of all the houses in the street, to convert them into different kinds of sale shops.—I shall have a Monmouth-street—an Exeter 'Change—a Cranbourn-alley—and a Rag-fair of my own, all united into one. What hard times do we live in?

Enter Quirk, and Sir George (reading a letter).

Sir George. I am come, Sir, to get you to discount a bill of 500l.

Pop. Sir George, I have been expecting you some time.

Sir George. (reading.) “Flexible—unfaithful— Lover.” Oh, heav'ns! *(reads again)*—“Never attempt to see us more. Sophia Howard—Penelope Howard.”—Undone—Undone—Oh! I am ruin'd indeed!—I merit it all for my foolish flattering folly. But can my Sophia think that I would ever forsake her? However, I will wait upon Diana.

Pop. I am sorry to see you so much agitated, Sir George.

Sir George. Not much, not much! But let not my folly neglect the distresses of my friends.

Pop. Walk in, Sir George, we shall soon settle the business.

Sir George. Oh, my Sophia! What shall I do?

Pop. (aside) I shall have him, I see; for young people, when much agitated, never mind the bargain they make.

Sir George. I am determin'd, however, to see Diana.— Oh, what a complicated day of distress, is this my day of majority! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II. *An Apartment at Sir George Courteous's.**Enter Sir George and La Roche following.*

Sir George. Ha! ha! ha! to be oblig'd, La Roche, in
a bill

a bill of five hundred pounds, to take near three hundred pounds in haberdashery wares---ha! ha! ha!

La Roche. Ha! ha! ha! very comical, mi Lord, ha! ha! ha!

(*Sings.*) "For you must have both gauze and lace,
" And ribbons to swell de bill;
" With furs, and feathers, and fatten silks,
" And money, mi Lor, beside."

Sir George. I have as much haberdashery as would set me up in Tavistock-street as a man millener, ha! ha! ha!

La Roche. Very witty!--Very witty, mi Lor, ha! ha! ha!

Enter Servant, Aminadab, and another Jew.

Servant. Sir George, two Jews want to speak to you.

[*Exit Servant.*

Sir George. Your business, gentlemen? *La Roche*, depart, and order the carriage to be ready. [*Exit La Roche.*

Aminadab. As I hear, Sir George, dat you are to become a bankrupt, I am come to offer you my services, as your petitioning creditor.

Sir George. My petitioning creditor!--Pray, Sir! what is your name?

Aminadab. Aminadab Lebanon, at your service. I am very well known by most of the gentlemen of the law---Do a great deal of business in bails and bankruptcies---Hope to have the honour to make you one, Sir George.

Sir George. I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Lebanon. And pray, Sir, who is this gentleman that you have brought along with you?

Aminadab. He is come, Sir George, to buy something from you---He is come to make you a dealer.

Sir George. A dealer!

Aminadab. Aye---We can't make you a bankrupt without you deal in something---Would you chuse to be a coal merchant?

Sir George. A coal-merchant, firrah!

Aminadab. Will you, Sir George, sell him a sack of coals?

Sir George. A sack of coals!

Aminadab. Or perhaps, you would rather be a tallow-chandler---Sell him a box of candles.

Sir George. Candles!

Aminadab. Or would your honour like to be a cheese-monger,

monger, or any profession you please, Sir George, it is all one to us?

Sir George. Hark'ee, Mr. Lebanon, get about your business; for if, by obtaining a surreptitious statute of bankruptcy, I could retrieve my whole fortune, I would not do it. Although I may have been an [un]thinking prodigal, I shall never become a deliberate scoundrel! La Roche! where are you? Shew these gentlemen the door.

Aminadab. Good morning to you, Sir George!--You will never be worth a groat until you follow our maxim, and think that honesty is the best policy---that is, *to be honest only to yourself.* Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit Aminadab and the other Jew.*]

Sir George. What a life does that wretch lead, whose only prayers are the most palpable perjuries!--But now for my visit to Diana---Oh! if thro' her means I can but once see my Sophia---I shall either procure her pardon, or perish at her feet. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. *The Pawnbroker's Shop.*

Enter Pop.

Pop. I can't forget the insult!--The parish officers to come to me in a drunken fit with a bastard child to pawn! Do they think my shop a Foundling-Hospital?--Demme, I never took in a child in my life but once--that was Miss Sophy--and now the jade has taken me in. Oh! if her mother had but given me a duplicate of her to heir my fortune, I would have advertised her in the Hue-and-cry, and put her into Newgate.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, my Lord Newmarket presents his compliments to you, and as he is going to the Races at Fountain Blows, and afterwards to Spa for a few months, he is to send you in his plate this evening till his return.

Pop. Make my most humble respects to my Lord Newmarket, and I will take greater care of it than any banker in town. [*Exit Servant.*] I shall see his Lordship in the evening.--How I have laughed to see him sneak into my shop!--But he is a most excellent customer, and always redeems his plate *after the meeting of Parliament.*

Enter Mrs. Termagant.

Pop. Well, Ma'am--What have you got to pledge, Ma'am?

Mrs

Mrs. Termagant. To pledge, Sir!—Have not you got a daughter in pledge, Sir?

Pop. 'Faith I have to my sorrow—but I wish I knew where she lies—I would soon redeem her, with a horse-whip, the jade!

Mrs. Termagant. Then follow me, and I will conduct you to her presence.

Pop. Will ye?—But where, where is she, my kind lady?

Mrs. Termagant. In Lower Grosvenor-street.—There is her card.—She now assumes the name of Miss Howard.

Pop. Here, John. (*Enter John.*) Tell Mr. Quirk, whom I expect every moment, that I have found my run-away-daughter, and to follow me immediately as this card shall direct.

Mrs. Termagant. I have you now, my base Baronet. *[aside.*

Pop. Now come along, my Lady.—I cannot contain my passion—I shall disinherit her—I shall disinherit her, Madam, and leave all my fortune to public charities, to sponge off my sinful peccadilloes---and ere I die it shall be the business of my life to follow the example of a worthy Borough justice, by searching all Middlesex and Surry for six black and four white fatten virgins to support my pall, and strew my coffin with Covent Garden nosegays.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV. *Sophia's Lodgings.*

Ninny discovered.

Ninny. Miss Sophy keeps me a long while! I have already been rewarded by Mrs. Termagant and the Captain, for telling them all the truth about Miss Sophia!—Now must I watch Sir George's coming, and give him this letter. *[Exit.*

SCENE V. *Another Apartment in Sophia's Lodgings.*

Enter Sophia.

Sophia. Now for another trial of my skill as a female jockey and gambler.—I know theoretically somewhat of both.—As you are cast off, Sir George, from the ideal Penelope, and from me as Sophia—if you now pay your addresses to me as Diana—I shall be thoroughly convinced, and for ever tear you from my heart!—It is Sir George, and here he comes.

Enter Sir George.

Sir George. A fine woman, if she had a more delicate step.

Sophia. Tallyhoicks, (*smacking her whip, and sings*)
 "Ye sportsmen draw near, and ye sportswomen too,
 "Who delight in the joys of the chace," &c.

Sir George. (*aside.*) All the sisters are devilish like one another.

Sophia. (*sings.*) "Who delight in the joys of the chace."
 (*Coming up to him in a masculine manner.*) Your demands with me?---Your name, Sir?

Sir George. Madam, I am Sir George Courteous, at your service.

Sophia. Soho!—Tallyhoicks!—You are the bold huntsman that would run down two at a time. Pray, Sir George, do you understand hazard?

Sir George. Such a question (*aside*). A little, Madam.

Sophia. Then you can answer me this question—When nine is the main, what is the odds that the caster does not nick it?

Sir George. Nine is the main! (*musing*). I can't resolve it instantly, Madam.

Sophia. No!---Then you know nothing of the game—but I shall inform you.---The odds is eight to one.

Sir George. She is a very fine girl! (*aside*)

Sophia. But you are, no doubt, an adept in whist?

Sir George. I know something of the game, Ma'am.

Sophia. Then supposing you're dealer, what is the odds in your favour of holding more than four trumps?

Sir George (*aside*). I am pretty well puzzled!---Dealer---the odds (*musing*).

Sophia. Aye, the odds.---Psha! Sisters told me you were a man of sense---Pray, Sir George, whether are you a rook or a pigeon?

Sir George. A harmless pigeon, Madam; a lonely turtle, come in quest of his mate!---(*aside.*) A fine girl with all her whims.

Sophia. My sisters are determined never more to see you, Sir George.

Sir George. (*aside*) Devilish handsome!

Sophia. So you may give over the chace. You are ignorant at hazard---ignorant at whist!---But---I shall now try you once more in a simple turf question.

Sir George. (*aside*) Unlucky!

Sophia. What weight ought a horse of thirteen hands to carry, for a give and take plate?

Sir

Sir George. (disconcerted) Really, Madam, I cannot tell!

Sophia. Not tell that! Seven stone, to be sure! I see plainly you are not a man of sense! and were my sister to entrust you with her fortune, you would soon dissipate it, as you have done your own.

Sir George. Cutting to the quick! (*aside.*)

Sophia. It is such as you, Sir George, that the black-legs feed upon---Substituting inclination for ideas; money, for skill; and wine, for wit, you squander away your whole fortunes, before you know their value! Ruin then converts the most of you to rooks; and as for those pluck'd pigeons that have sensibility to perceive their folly, and too much innate honour to retaliate, they fly, in despair, either into the fickle noose of marriage, or into the fatal noose of death!

Sir George. What an angel! (*aside*) I must flatter her to make my peace with Sophia. My Love!--

Sophia. Flattering man! (*aside*)

Sir George. I vow, my dearest, that you and your sisters are the three Graces! Oh, let me be your Paris! For tho' Sophia be Venus, Penelope be Juno, and you Minerva! yet, unlike to Paris, I would throw to you, for your wit and spirit, the golden apple of my heart!

Sophia. (aside) Versatile man! but I'll now put his pretended passion into a real panic!

Sir George. My Diana!

Sophia. (starting.) Ha! there are both my sisters coming this way---What shall I do with you?

Sir George. The devil! hide me! hide me any where until you can pacify them.

Sophia. Get you into that closet, and, as you value my future esteem, attempt not to stir till I call you.

Sir George. In I go---(*going*)---Now to peruse this letter, that is said to be of so urgent a nature.

[*Exit into the closet.*]

Sophia. How must I act? Shall I discover myself and discard him?---I must! but alas! I cannot!---Yet why not do it, since his affections are not fix'd on me. For it is not Venus, Juno, nor Minerva neither, that is his idol; but Plutus. Alas! it is the fate of our sex to believe, and of the other to betray!---Resolve I must!

Sir George. (looking out, with a letter in his hand.) What a fortunate discovery has this letter produced!--Miss Sophia Pop!--Oh! what a blockhead was I, not to perceive all her tricks of transformation!

Sophia. I am resolved!--(*goes to the closet door.*) Sir George!

Sir George (coming out.) My dearest!

Sophia.

Sophia. Hold! Before we part for ever, I deem it proper to explain my reasons. When I first beheld you, I blushinglly acknowledged that I felt a secret partiality in your favour—for while your person engag'd my attention, your manners acquir'd my esteem.—But hesitating, though not discrediting your violent protestations of affection, know, Sir George, that I assumed the dress and manners of two ideal sisters—for I have none—only to probe those protestations of your's to the quick --and I have found you now to be the man of the world—not the man worthy of my heart.

Sir George. Ha, ha, ha!

Sophia. Do you laugh at me? —But—

Sir George. Ha, ha, ha!—As Jack Falstaff says, “D’ye think, my dear, I did not know you?” ha, ha, ha!—Yes, by the Lord, as well as Mr. Peter Pop that begot you, *Sophia.* Ha, ha, ha!

Sophia. Do ye laugh at me?

Sir George. Ha, ha, ha! You would make a devilish good actress, my dear. (*Mimicking her as Penelope, lisping*) “I was always out a shopping”—says your sister Penelope,—Then for Diana---“When nine is the main, what is the odds that the catter does not nick it!” ha! ha! ha!

Sophia. And did you, Sir George, really know me?

Sir George. If I had not, such a form as your's, my *Sophia*, however disguised, could never cease being attractive.

Sophia. Now you flatter.

Sir George. To prove that I do not—and that I am in downright earnest, and in a very violent passion—I now give you a challenge.

Sophia. A challenge!

Sir George. Yes, Madam, I am serious—Heart against heart—Cupid and Hymen shall be our seconds—and if you quit the field till death, I shall post you up on every toilet in town, as the most consummate coward that ever shrunk from matrimonial bed and board. Do you accept the challenge, my dear?

Sophia. I—I—I—I cannot refuse it.—

Sir George. La Roche!

Enter La Roche.

Order a post-coach and fix hither instantly, to drive us to Gretna Green.

Sophia. So far, Sir George!

Sir George. The torch of hymen, my *Sophia*, is not permitted to burn bright on this side the Tweed—To debar us the freedom of choice, is the only badge of slavery that disgraces this land of liberty!

Sophia.

Sophia. Pshaw, Sir George! it is rather because you Englishmen cannot endure chains!—ha! ha! ha!

La Roche. Ver witty, ver witty, my Lady, Sir George--- ha! ha! (*Sings.*) “De priest is dere on Greta Green---
“De black parson of miscarriage”,---

(*Going—is stopp'd by Ninny.*)

Enter Ninny.

Ninny. Oh, Sir George!---Oh, Madam!

Both. What is the matter?

Ninny. Your papa, Mr. Pop, Ma'am---Mrs. Termagant, Sir George---they are now both coming up stairs--- see there they be.

Enter Mrs. Termagant and Pop.

Pop. (*taking hold of Sophia.*) Oh! you robber---where is my jewels and money! Oh! you runaway! where is your reputation?

Mrs. Termagant. So, Sir George—is this your gratitude? But my attorney and his myrmidons shall take you under their protection immediately.

Sir George. 'Sdeath! Madam!---Oh! if my uncle, or if Mr. Quirk were here?---Ha! the Captain!

Enter Captain Prywell.

Pop. Was it to ruin my daughter, Sir George Courteous, that I discounted your Bill without accepting of any dounceur?

Captain. Nephew, what is the matter?

Sir George. Shortly this, Sir!---There is a mutual attachment between this lady, who is that gentleman's daughter, and your humble servant---and he is now come most mal-apropos to stop proceedings.

Pop. Proceedings!---What proceedings? I am afraid you have made too many proceedings already with my daughter.---You are a baronet forsooth? But what sort of a baronet, a distress'd and bare baronet indeed, whose lands are only ploughed by an air balloon.

Captain. Sir, the gentleman is my nephew, and a man of honour.

Pop. A man of honour---He may be so.---But who are you, Sir?---(*to the Captain*) I am sure you are no man of honour, for I never saw you in my shop.

Ninny (*to the Captain*) Don't heed him, your honour--- You know I told you all about him---and that if you could make him a Parliament man---he would give up his daughter to any body.

Captain.

Captain. Thank you, Ninny---I had forgot---A good hint---Harkye, Sir, (*to Pop,*) this Gentleman, Sir George Courteous, is in love with your daughter, who I understand is a most amiable young lady; therefore if you will give your consent freely to their union, as I am a man of fortune, and possess a great borough interest, as I hear you are an able orator, I have no doubts of putting you into Parliament.

Pop. You are a very worthy gentleman, and a man of honour into the bargain!---Give me a seat in Parliament, and your nephew, Sir George, may have any seat in return that I can dispose of.

Captain. Oh! agreed---Give him your daughter.

Pop. On those conditions, I shall---Sir George, take my daughter---and if you behave yourselves to my liking, I shall recall my intention of leaving my fortune to public charities.

Captain. Right!

Pop. And instead of ten virgins for my pall, I shall order it to be supported by ten worthy wives, who can prove themselves to have done as much good in their generation, *if possible, as the greatest and best lady in all Great Britain!*

Sir George. (*to Pop,*) Sir! it shall be the business of our lives to be ever returning you our most grateful acknowledgments.

Mrs. Termagant. This is all a trick, Sir George---But I shall give retaining fees to all the counsellors in Christendom, before I be depriv'd of justice and revenge! [*Exit.*]

Captain. She shall be immediately repaid.

Pop. Remember, Sir George, that before the expiry of a twelvemonth, I expect a duplicate of my daughter; ha! ha! ha!

Sir George. Oh! uncle! from this day I shall date my happiness! 'Tis true, I pursued pleasure every where; I courted her every moment, in every form, in every place---But she was the *ignis fatuus* that I never found!---When in search of her at the Pantheon!---Oh! it was the Pantheon of the gods to me! I found in this form, her celestial superior---Felicity! (*embracing Sophia.*) And may every one around me, (*looking round the house*) soon embrace her endearing and ever blest similitude, without undergoing my misfortunes!

[*Extant omnes.*]

F I N I S.